

Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-designate Mineta.

Statement on Congressional Action on Reporting and Disclosure Requirements for Political Action Committees

June 29, 2000

The Vice-President and I applaud the House and Senate for the broad, bipartisan approval of legislation to establish reporting and disclosure requirements for section 527 organizations, the so-called stealth PAC's. I commend the sponsors from both sides of the aisle and from both Chambers of Congress—including, Senators McCain, Lieberman, and Feingold and Representatives Doggett, Moore, Castle, and Houghton—for their leadership in addressing backdoor spending by these outside organizations.

Passage of this bill proves that public interest can triumph over special interests, and I look forward to signing it as a first step toward meaningful campaign finance reform. There is still time this year to enact more comprehensive reform, and I renew my call to Congress for immediate action on the Shays-Meehan bill in the House and the McCain-Feingold bill in the Senate to restore the public's faith in the integrity of our election system.

Statement on Senate Action To Protect Medicare Surpluses

June 29, 2000

I am pleased that the Senate followed the leadership of Vice President Gore by agreeing to lock away Medicare surpluses for debt reduction to help prepare for Medicare's future challenges. Before we make any other major budget decisions this year, we should agree that Medicare funds should not be used to finance tax cuts or other spending. Walling off Medicare will further strengthen our fiscal discipline by locking in \$400 billion of additional debt reduction and help keep our economy strong. The Conrad-Lautenberg amendment passed by the Senate today

would truly protect Medicare and enhance our fiscal discipline. This amendment takes Medicare fully off budget, as the Vice President proposed, and as we have done with Social Security. I look forward to working with Congress on a Medicare off-budget lockbox bill that I can sign this summer.

Earlier this week, I made an offer for bipartisan cooperation on America's priorities. I called for establishing a foundation of fiscal discipline—the Conrad-Lautenberg amendment would accomplish that. I urge Congress to pass a plan that gives real, voluntary Medicare prescription drug coverage that is available and affordable for all seniors. Only if Congress does this, would I then be willing to sign broader marriage penalty relief legislation.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Supplemental Appropriations Request

June 29, 2000

I am pleased that the House passed with overwhelming support my emergency funding request for a range of essential and time-sensitive needs. It has been 4 months since I first sent this request to Capitol Hill, and the needs are all the greater today.

With this funding, we will be able to support the courageous antidrug efforts of Colombia which can, in turn, help curb the flow of drugs in our Nation; we will help build homes for those still deprived of permanent housing by Hurricane Floyd; we will have funds available for low income Americans to pay for home cooling in the event of a dangerous summer heat wave; and we will provide support for our troops and efforts to build stability in Kosovo.

I am also pleased that Congress has, at our urging, dropped several deeply problematic anti-environmental riders along with the tobacco rider which would block Federal Government litigation against tobacco companies to recover costs to taxpayers of smoking related illnesses.

While it contains certain flaws, in total this bill will make our Nation safer and more secure by meeting essential and long-overdue needs at home and abroad.

Message on the Observance of Independence Day, 2000

June 29, 2000

I am pleased and proud to join my fellow Americans across the nation and around the world in celebrating Independence Day.

When our Founders set their hands to the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and gave life to the United States of America, they took an enormous leap of faith. They placed a great trust not only in their fellow citizens, but also in all Americans who would follow in their footsteps. That trust has been passed from generation to generation, and it has been honored by millions of men and women whose hard work, sacrifice, generous spirit, and love of country have seen us safely through more than two centuries of great challenge and change.

As we come together once again to celebrate the birth of our great nation, we reflect on the remarkable achievements that have placed us in a position of unparalleled world leadership. For the peace and prosperity we enjoy today, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the great patriots who have come before us. As 21st century Americans, we are not only the beneficiaries of their courage and vision—we are also the stewards of their sacrifice.

It is up to us to preserve the freedom that so many brave Americans risked their lives to secure. It is up to us to realize our country's highest ideals of justice, equality, and human dignity. It is up to us to reject the forces of hatred that would seek to divide us and instead embrace our common humanity and the values, history, and heritage we share as Americans. Our nation's journey to form a more perfect union is far from over; but, strengthened by our Founders' vision and inspired by our children's dreams, we are sure to reach our destination.

On this Independence Day, as we celebrate the past, present, and future of Amer-

ica, Hillary joins me in sending best wishes to all for a wonderful Fourth of July.

Bill Clinton

Proclamation 7325—To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the Generalized System of Preferences and for Other Purposes

June 29, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Pursuant to sections 501, 503(a)(1)(A), and 503(c)(1) of title V of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2461, 2463(a)(1)(A), and 2463(c)(1)), the President may designate or withdraw designation of specified articles provided for in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) as eligible for preferential tariff treatment under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) when imported from designated beneficiary developing countries.

2. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(A) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)), beneficiary developing countries, except those designated as least-developed beneficiary developing countries pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(D) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(D)), are subject to competitive need limitations on the preferential treatment afforded under the GSP to eligible articles.

3. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(C) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(C)), a country that is no longer treated as a beneficiary developing country with respect to an eligible article may be redesignated as a beneficiary developing country with respect to such article if imports of such article from such country did not exceed the competitive need limitations in section 503(c)(2)(A) (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)) during the preceding calendar year.

4. Pursuant to section 503(c)(2)(F) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(F)), the President may disregard the competitive need limitation provided in section 503(c)(2)(A)(i)(II) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C.